

Cornerstone Testing Information

I. Bob Jones Standardized Testing

As homeschooling parents, we are always questioning ourselves. When it comes to education, there is no real standard: families are different, situations are different, and children are different. We must cater to what works best for each of those differences and trust in the Lord's faithfulness. Testing is a good resource for parents. It tells us where our children's strengths and weaknesses are and how to adjust our curriculum to meet their needs. More than anything else, testing is a way to confirm to parents (and others) that our children are succeeding. Cornerstone provides standardized testing in May of each year. We test through Bob Jones University and use *Iowa Test, Form E*. All grades may be tested and outside families are welcomed to join us.

II. SAT/ACT

The SAT/ACT tests do not test skill; they test how well a student takes the test. By learning specific strategies, a student can work toward a higher score. Cornerstone offers a Spring class to help students prepare for the tests. The SAT and ACT are offered throughout the year and should be taken several times by the end of the first semester of a student's senior year in order to work towards the best score possible. Although the essay is optional on both tests, it is recommended to complete the essay portion at least once. Not all schools require the essay, so it is better to have it completed in the event a school asks for it. It will also show the student's extra effort and writing ability.

III. Classical Learning Test—CLT

These tests are similar to their standardized counterparts (PSAT/SAT/ACT), but differ in their material. Their readings will be classically based and more familiar to our students. CLT8 is a high school readiness test for 7th and 8th graders. CLT10 is for 9th and 10th grades and is comparable to the PSAT, and the CLT is for 11th and 12th grades and is comparable to the SAT/ACT. Both the CLT10 and CLT offer opportunities for scholarships from a long list of colleges that accept CLT scores. Cornerstone offers CLT testing in the Spring.

IV. AP/CLEP Testing

Cornerstone does not offer these exams. They are government exams and are offered to homeschoolers in a variety of locations. The greatest benefit these tests offer is allowing a student to gain college credit while in high school.

A. CLEP Exam

The CLEP allows students of various ages to take exams based on information they already know. These tests were originally intended to enable veterans and other adults to return to school and quickly earn a college degree. Because of this, the tests are available throughout the year, which enable students to take more of them. CLEP offers 33 different subject exams and the tests are accepted at 2,900 colleges and universities. The essay portion is optional. It is possible for students to earn 3-9 credits per exam. There are no courses or College Board developed curriculum to help students prepare. A student must study and prepare independently. The CLEP is more standard and will not even be considered by the high-end schools.

B. AP Exam

AP allow students to take college-level classes that conclude with an AP exam. Successful exam scores are accepted at most two- and four-year colleges and universities for credit or advanced placement. More prestigious universities accept AP tests over CLEP. AP offers 38 different subject exams which are available once a year in May. Because of this, students may only be able to handle taking a couple of tests a year. 3-5 credits per exam may be earned. Homeschooled students can prepare independently and are not required to take an AP course in order to take the exam. These tests are rigorous and are aligned with the Common Core, which means there is a stronger emphasis on essays and written answers. This can be a benefit for Classical homeschoolers since it allows a student to use his/her rhetoric skills to show the depth of understanding in the subject matter. AP tests are also a good measurement for colleges/universities to see a student's ability to handle college level work.

C. Which Test is Best?

A student who is not a strong writer might consider taking CLEP exams. Students looking to enter more upper level schools should consider AP exams. However, taking a combination of both the AP and the CLEP would be the best route. This will enable a student to show his/her strengths with the AP exam and take a variety of other subjects with the CLEP. It can seem costly to accomplish, but in the end, it will save money on college tuition. A *highly* motivated student could conceivably earn a college degree by the age of 18 through dual credit classes and the AP/CLEP exams.

V. Indiana Requirements for General and Honors Diplomas

<https://www.doe.in.gov/graduation-pathways>